

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

A NOTE ON *PHASCOLOSOMA TURNERAE* RICE (SIPUNCULA)

*Phascolosoma turnerae* Rice, 1985 was described from 104 specimens of a sipunculan found boring into submerged wood and was collected at depths of 1135-1184 m in the Straits of Florida, south of Key West, U.S.A. and also from 366-412 m in the northern area of the Gulf of Mexico, Alabama, U.S.A.<sup>1</sup> This record is the first of a sipunculan living and boring in wood. *P. turnerae* is distinguished from other congeners by the shape of its introvert hooks (Fig. 1), and the structure of its body papillae.

*Phascolosoma kapalum* Edmonds, 1985 was described from three specimens dredged at 710 m off Sydney, N.S.W., Australia during a cruise of the "Kapala" in 1977.<sup>2</sup> Edmonds in 1985 was unaware of Rice's 1985 species. On comparing material of the two species in 1988, it became clear that *P. turnerae* and *P. kapalum* were conspecific, the latter being a junior synonym. (The date of publication of *P. turnerae* was 20 March 1985 and that of *P. kapalum* was 28 June 1985). No wood, however, was associated with the "Kapala" specimens nor did the collection records report the presence of any at the time of collection. It seems probable, then, that the specimens had been dislodged either during dredging or sorting.

Recently a single specimen of *P. turnerae* was found in some material sent for identification from the Northern Territory Museum, Darwin. The specimen (NTM WS87) was collected during trawling operations of "SOELA" in Queensland waters (17°59.2'S - 17°55.8'S, 147°04.5'E - 147°01.5'E) at 259-260 m by H. Larson, 16.1.1986. The collection label

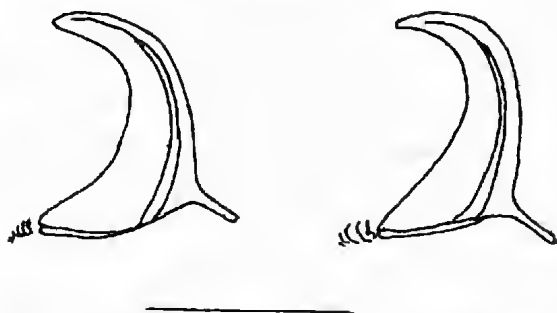


Fig. 1. *Phascolosoma turnerae*, introvert hooks from Queensland specimen (Scale line = 0.05 mm).

reports that the specimen was collected from "a piece of rotting wood" and a piece of the wood was included in the collecting tube along with the sipunculan.

The purpose of the present note is threefold: 1. to record the synonymy of *P. turnerae* and *P. kapalum*, the former name having priority. 2. to confirm that *P. turnerae* is associated with submerged wood and 3. to record the wide distribution of *P. turnerae* now reported from the Atlantic Ocean (Straits of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico) and the south-west Pacific Ocean (off Sydney and off the Great Barrier Reef, Australia).

<sup>1</sup>Rice, M. E. (1985) Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington 98(1), 54-60.

<sup>2</sup>Edmonds, S. J. (1985) Trans. R. Soc. S. Aust. 109.(2), 43-44.